28. (New) The connector of claim 26, wherein the second voltage is about 48 volts.

29. (New) The connector of claim 26, wherein the guide module comprises one or more guide pins.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8-12, 18, and 22 have been amended. Claims 7, 13-17, and 23-25 have been cancelled without prejudice. New claims 26-29 have been added. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1-6, 8-12, 18-22, and 26-29 remain pending in the present application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the title and the abstract as not being specific. The title and abstract have been amended. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's objection be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 3, 13-17, 18-22, 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Claims 13-17 and 23-25 have been cancelled, rendering the Examiner's rejections of these claims moot. Claim 3 has been amended. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's allegation that claims 18-22 are unclear. With regard to claims 18-19 and 21-22, the Examiner offered no specific reasons for the rejection and Applicants believe that these claims are clear in their present form. With regard to claim 20, the Examiner alleges that the terms "and expanding" are unclear. Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, Applicants state in the specification that "in one embodiment, the second set 525 of electrical connectors may be compliant pins, which when inserted through one or more openings (shown in Figure 6) of the expander board 40, expand and secure the wafer 410 in

place." See Patent Application, pg. 10, ll. 25. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections of claims 3, 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 1-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over any one of Amberg, Chen (both), Lee, Habegger, Heberling, Fox, Leman or Gierut. Claims 1-25 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen or Habegger, either one alone or taken in view of Broeksteeg, Amberg, Lee, Provencher, Fox and HDM. Claims 1-25 were additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heberling or Amberg, or Leman, any one alone or in view of Broeksteeg, Amberg, Lee, Provencher, Fox and HDM. Claims 7, 13-17, and 23-25 have been cancelled, rendering the Examiner's rejections of these claims moot. The Examiner's rejections of the remaining pending claims are respectfully traversed.

With regard to independent claims 1, 10, and 18, Applicants describe and claim a connector coupled to the first board and adapted to parallelly couple the first board to the second board. The connector comprises one or more wafers capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage, a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage to the second board, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage. The independent claims 10 and 18 further claim a guide module for aligning the connector with the second board.

The Examiner's cited prior art references are silent with regard to a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage to the second board, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage. The Examiner's prior art references are also silent with regard to a guide module for aligning the connector with the second board. Thus, Applicants

respectfully submit that claims 1, 10, 18, and all claims depending therefrom, are not anticipated by the cited prior art and respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are not obvious in view of the cited prior art. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (CCPA 1974). Second, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. That is, there must be something in the prior art as a whole to suggest the desirability, and thus the obviousness, of making the combination. *Panduit Corp. v. Dennison Mfg. Co.*, 810 F.2d 1561 (Fed. Cir. 1986). In fact, the absence of a suggestion to combine is dispositive in an obviousness determination. *Gambro Lundia AB v. Baxter Healthcare Corp.*, 110 F.3d 1573 (Fed. Cir. 1997). The mere fact that the prior art can be combined or modified does not make the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 U.S.P.Q.2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990); M.P.E.P. § 2143.01. Third, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991); M.P.E.P. § 2142. A recent Federal Circuit case emphasizes that, in an obviousness situation, the prior art must disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, and that any motivation to combine or modify the prior art must be based upon a suggestion in the prior art. *In re Lee*, 61 U.S.P.Q.2d 143 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (copy attached).

Conclusory statements regarding common knowledge and common sense are insufficient to support a finding of obviousness. *Id.* at 1434-35.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art is completely silent with regard to a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage to the second board, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art is also completely silent with regard to a guide module for aligning the connector with the second board. Thus, the cited references when considered alone or in combination do not suggest all of the claimed elements, as required by the Federal Circuit. Furthermore, there is no suggestion or motivation to modify the prior art in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 10, 18, and all claims depending therefrom, are not obvious in view of the cited prior art and respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Arguments with respect to other dependent claims have been noted. However, in view of the aforementioned arguments, these arguments are moot and therefore not specifically addressed. To the extent that characterizations of the prior art references or Applicants' claimed subject matter are not specifically addressed, it is to be understood that Applicants do not acquiesce to such characterization.

With regard to new independent claim 26, Applicants describe and claim a connector coupled to the first board and adapted to parallelly couple the first board to the second board. The connector comprises one or more wafers capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage, a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage to the second board, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage, and a guide module for aligning the connector with the second board. Thus, for at least the aforementioned reasons, Applicants

respectfully submit that new independent claim 26 and claims 27-29 depending therefrom are allowable over the cited prior art.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Houston, Texas telephone number (713) 934-4064 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 8/27/02

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ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANTS

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A processor-based system, comprising:

a first board; [and]

a second board [having]; and

a connector[, wherein the connector is] coupled to the first board and adapted to parallelly couple the first board to the second board, comprising:

one or more wafers capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage;

a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage to the second board, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage.

3. (Amended) The processor-based system of claim [2] 1, wherein the [connector comprises a power module to receive an electrical signal and to provide the electrical signal to the first board.] the first voltage is about 2-4 volts and the second voltage is about 48 volts.

5. (Amended) The processor-based system of claim 1, wherein the connector further comprises a first support member and a second support member with one or more contact modules disposed therein.

8. (Amended) The processor-based system of claim 1, wherein said connector is adapted to planarly couple the first board to the second board.

10. (Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a first board;

an expander board; and

a connector having a first end adapted to be coupled to the first board and a second end adapted to be coupled to the expander board, wherein the first board and the expander board are coupled substantially in parallel, the connector comprising:

one or more wafers capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage;

a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage that is larger than the first voltage; and

a guide module for aligning the connector with the expander board.

11. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the expander board couples the first board to a switch.

12. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the [connector comprises a power module for receiving a power signal from the switch and providing the power signal to one or more components of the first board] the first voltage is about 2-4 volts and the second voltage is about 48 volts.

18. (Amended) A method, comprising:

coupling a connector to a first printed circuit board, wherein the connector is capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage;

aligning the connector with a second printed circuit board using a guide module;

coupling the second printed circuit board to the first printed circuit board using the connector, wherein the coupled first and second printed circuit boards are substantially parallel to each other[.];

providing power at a second voltage from the first printed circuit board to the second printed circuit board using a power module in the connector, wherein the second voltage is larger than the first voltage.

22. (Amended) The method of claim 19, wherein the second printed circuit board [including] includes a second connector having one or more receptacles, wherein coupling the second set of electrical connectors to the second printed circuit board comprises inserting the second set of electrical connectors in the one or more receptacles of the second connector.

26. (New) A connector, comprising:

a top supporting member;

a bottom supporting member;

one or more wafers coupled to the top and bottom supporting members and capable of receiving and delivering at least one first voltage;

a power module capable of receiving and delivering a second voltage that is larger than the first voltage; and

a guide module for aligning the connector with the expander board.

27. (New) The connector of claim 26, wherein the first voltage is about 2-4 volts.

28. (New) The connector of claim 26, wherein the second voltage is about 48 volts.

29. (New) The connector of claim 26, wherein the guide module comprises one or more guide pins.